

The Lottery of Life.

Sharpe's Magazine for May contains a translation of the "Récit de Deux Mondes," of several from which we select the following thrilling scene. A captain in the insurgent army is giving an account of a meditated attack upon a hacienda, situated in the Cordillera, and occupied by a large force of Spanish soldiers. After a variety of details, he continues:

Having arrived at the hacienda unperceived, thanks to the obscurity of a moonless night, we came to halt under some large trees, at some distance from the building, and I rode forward from my troop in order to reconnoitre the place. The hacienda, so far as I could see in gliding among the trees, formed a huge massive parallelogram, strengthened by enormous buttresses of heavy stone. Along this chasm, the walls of the hacienda almost formed the continuation of another perpendicular one, chiselled by nature herself in the rock, and the bottom of which incessantly boiled up from below did not allow it to measure their awful depths. This place was known in the country by the name of "the Voladero."

I had explored all sides of the building except this, when I knew not what scruple of military honor incited me to continue my ride along the ravine which protected the rear of the hacienda. Between the walls and the precipice there was a narrow path, but about six feet wide; by day, the passage would not have been dangerous, but by night it was a perilous enterprise. The walls of the farm house took an extensive sweep, the path crept around their entire basement, and to follow it to the end in the darkness, only two paces from the edge of a perpendicular chasm, was no very easy task even for a practiced horseman as myself. Nevertheless, I did not hesitate, but boldly urged my horse between the walls of the farm-house and the abyss of the Voladero. I had got over half the distance without accident, when all of a sudden my horse neighed aloud. This neigh made me shudder. I had reached a point where the ground was but just high enough for the four legs of a horse, and it was impossible to retrace my steps.

"Hail!" I exclaimed aloud, at the risk of betraying myself—which was even less dangerous than encountering a horseman in front of me on such a road. "There is a Christian passing along the ravine! Keep back!"

It was too late. At that moment a man on horseback passed round the buttresses, which here and there obstructed this accursed pathway. He advanced towards me. I trembled in my saddle; my forehead was bathed in a cold sweat.

"For the love of God! can you not return?" I exclaimed, terrified at the fearful situation in which we both were placed.

"Impossible!" replied the horseman, in a hollow voice. He recommended my soul to God. To turn our horses round for want of room, to back them along the path which we had traversed, or even to dismount from them, these were three impossibilities which placed us both in presence of a fearful doom. Between two horsemen so placed upon this fearful path, had been father and son, one of them must inevitably have become the prey of the other. But a few seconds had passed, and we were already face to face with the unknown and myself. Our horses were head to head, and their nostrils dilated with terror, mingled together their fiery breathing. Both of us halted in a dead silence. Above was the smooth and lofty wall of the hacienda; on the other side, but three feet distance from the wall, opened the horrible gulch. Was it an enemy? I hesitated. At that period in my young bosom, led me to hope it was.

"Are you for Mexico and the Insurgents?" I exclaimed, in a moment of excitement, ready to spring upon the unknown horseman if he answered me in the negative.

"Mexico is Insurgente—that is my password," replied the cavalier. "I am the Colonel Garduno."

And I am the Captain Castano," he replied. Our acquaintance was of long standing, and but for our mutual agitation we should have had no need to exchange our names. The colonel had left us two days since at the head of a detachment, which we supposed to be either prisoners or cut off, for he had not been seen to return to the camp.

"Well, colonel," I exclaimed, "I am sorry you have not returned, but I perceive that one of us must yield the pathway to the other."

Our horses had the bridle on their necks, and I put my hand in the holsters of my saddle to draw out my pistols.

"I see it so plainly," replied the colonel, with a alarming coolness, "that I should already have blown out the brains of your horse, but for the fear lest mine, in a moment of terror, should precipitate me, with yourself, to the bottom of the abyss."

remarked, in fact, that the colonel already held his pistols in his hand. We both maintained the most profound silence. Our horses felt the danger like ourselves, and remained as immovable as if their feet were nailed to the ground. My excitement had entirely subsided. "What are we going to do?" I demanded of the colonel.

"Draw lots of the two shall leap into the ravine."

It was in truth the sole means of resolving the difficulty. "There are nevertheless some precautions to take," said the colonel. "He who shall be condemned by lot shall retire backwards. It will be but a feeble chance of escape for him I admit; but, in short, it is a chance, and especially one in favor of the winner."

"You cling not to life, then?" I cried out, terrified at the *sang-froid* with which this proposition was put to me.

"I cling to life more than yourself," sharply replied the colonel, "for I have a mortal aversion to avenge. But the time is slipping away. Are you ready to proceed to draw the last lottery at which one of us will ever assist?"

How were we to proceed to this drawing by lot? by means of the wet finger, like infants, or by head and tail, like the school-boys. Both ways were impracticable. Our hands in the darkness, and the danger of the heads of the horses might cause them to give a fatal start. Should we toss up a piece of coin, the night was too dark to enable us to distinguish which side fell upward. The colonel thought him of an expedient, of which I never should have dreamed.

"Listen to me, captain," said the colonel, to whom I had communicated my perplexity. "I have an expedient. The terror which our horses feel makes them draw every moment a burning breath."

"The first of two whose horses shall neigh—" "Wins!" I hastily exclaimed.

"Not so—shall be the loser. I know that you are a countryman, and such as you can do whatever you please with your horse. As to myself, who but last year was the groom of a theologian, I have no equestrian prowess. You may be able to make your horse neigh—to hinder him from doing so is a very different matter."

We waited in dread and anxious silence until the voice of one of our horses should break forth. This silence lasted for a minute—for an age! It was my horse who neighed the first. The colonel gave no external manifestation of his joy, but no doubt he thanked God to the very bottom of his soul.

"You will allow me a minute to make my peace with Heaven?" I said to the colonel, with failing voice.

"Will five minutes be sufficient?"

"It will," I replied. The colonel drew out his watch. I addressed towards the heavens, brilliant with stars, which I thought I was looking up to for the last time, and intense and a burning prayer.

"It is time," said the colonel, with infirm hand gathered up the bridle of my horse, and drew it within my fingers, which were agitated by a nervous tremor.

"Yet one moment more," I said to the colonel. "For I have need of all my coolness to carry into execution the fearful maneuver which I am about to commence."

"Granted," replied Garduno. "I have been here, you had been in the country. My childhood, and part of my earliest youth, all had been passed on horseback. I may say, without flattery myself, that if there was any one in the world capable of executing this equestrian feat, it was myself. I rallied myself with an almost supernatural effort, and succeeded in recovering my entire self-possession in the very face of death. Take it at the worst, I had already braved it too often to be any longer alarmed at it. From that instant, I dared to hope at last."

As soon as my horse felt, for the first time since my acquaintance with the colonel, the bit compressing his mouth, I perceived that he trembled beneath me. I strengthened myself firmly on my stirrups, to make the terrified animal understand that his master no

longer trembled. I held him up with the bridle and the hams, as every good horseman does in a dangerous passage, and with the bridle, the body, and the spur together, succeeding in backing him a few paces. His head was already at a greater distance from that of the horse of the colonel, who, in courage, was all he could with his hands. He was now living in the poor trembling brute, who obeyed me in spite of his terror, repose himself for a few moments, and then recommenced the same maneuver. All on a sudden I felt his hind legs give way under me. A horrible shudder ran through my whole frame. I closed my eyes as if about to roll to the bottom of the abyss, and I gave to my body a violent impulse on the side next the hacienda, the surface of which offered not a single projection, not a single turf of weeds to check my descent. This sudden movement, joined to the desperate struggles of my horse, was the salvation of my life. He had sprung up again, on his legs, which seemed ready to fall from under him, so desperately did I feel them tremble.

I had succeeded in reaching, between the brink of the precipice and the wall of the building, a spot some few inches broader. A few more would have enabled me to turn him round, but to attempt it would have been fatal, and I dared not venture. I sought to resume my backward progress, step by step. Twice the horse threw himself on his hind legs and fell down upon the same spot. It is in vain to urge him anew, either with voice, bridle, or spur; the animal obstinately refused to take a single step in the rear. Nevertheless I did not feel my courage yet exhausted, for I had no desire to die. One last and solitary chance of safety suddenly appeared to me like a flash of light, and I resolved to employ it. Through the fastening of my boot, and in reach of my hand, was passed a sharp and keen knife, which I drew forth from its sheath. With my left hand I held the hilt, and with my right, I cut the bridle, all the while letting him hear my voice. The poor animal replied to my caresses by plaintive neighing; then, not to alarm him abruptly, my hand followed by little and little the curve of his nervous neck, and finally rested upon the spot where the last of the vertebrae unites itself with the cranium. The horse trembled, but I calmed him with my voice. When I felt his very life, so to speak, palpitate in the hollow beneath the collar, I leaned over towards the wall, my feet gently slid from the stirrups, and with one vigorous blow I buried the pointed blade of my knife in the seat of the vital principle. The animal fell as if thunderstruck, without a single motion, and for myself, with my knees almost as high as my chin, I found myself on horseback across a corpse. I was saved! I uttered a triumphant cry, which was responded to by the colonel, and which the abyss re-echoed with a hollow sound, as if it felt that its prey had escaped from it. I quitted the saddle, sat myself down between the wall and the body of my horse, and vigorously pushed with my feet against the carcass of the wretched animal, which rolled down into the abyss. I then arose, and cleared at a few bounds the distance which separated the place where I was from the plain. The horse, which I had just killed, was the terror which I had so long represented. I sunk in a swoon upon the ground. When I re-opened my eyes, the colonel was by my side.

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"To T. P. BARNUM, Esq.—My Dear Sir: I accept your proposition to close our contract to-night, at the end of the 93d concert, on condition of my paying you \$7,000 in addition to the sum I forfeit, under the condition of finishing the engagement at the end of our last concert."

"I am, dear sir, yours, truly," JENNY LIND. "Philadelphia, 9th June, 1851."

The Ancestry of Jenny Lind.—It would appear from the following genealogical statement, that the ancestors of Jenny Lind were of Scotch origin. It is from a Scotch paper, and we give it for the edification of our readers:

Three streamlets flow into the Garneek near Dairy—the Caaf, the Bomba, and the Dusk. Ascending the course of the Caaf for a little more than a mile, we arrive at a cascade of singular beauty. An old mill stands on the bank, and the stream is called the Caaf-mill. The chief part on the Clyde to the confluence of the stream. The foundations of an ancient baronial tower may yet be traced in this neighborhood. It is said to have been the residence of the Linnies of that ilk. A member now of that extinct family is supposed to be the hero of "The Heir of Linn."—one of the best specimens of our ancient ballad literature, couched in quaint language, presenting a vivid picture of the manners and customs of a past age, and in which the author, in style and coloring, has valuable moral in a way at once strikingly contrived and forcible. According to a zealous Jonathan Oldblood of the West, the Swedish Nightingale is descended from this family. The fact that towards the middle of the seventeenth century the name of the Laird of Linn, ceases to appear in public documents; that emigration from the Linnies to the Continent is traced to the time among the wealthier classes, and that the Christian name of the fair Swede is purely Scottish, would seem so far to support the accuracy of the supposition. Can anything more natural be conceived than the exiled sons and daughters of Colla, preserving among their descendants the names which they themselves bore, and which, when they came to dwell in the hills and glens of the manly men and modest maidens of their native land? Warm-hearted, generous, and enthusiastic, may we not even recognize a daughter of old Scotia in Jenny Lind? How singular the coincidence that, on getting a glimpse of Bothwell Castle, she involuntarily burst into song—so irresistibly were her feelings moved on first—holding the old baronial tower. Laugh if you like at her equestrian prowess. You may be able to make your horse neigh—to hinder him from doing so is a very different matter."

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A Family Meeting.—A most interesting and extraordinary meeting of a Jersey family recently took place in Riley town, Butler county, Ohio. The family was that of Mr. Ezekiel DeCamp, who with his wife emigrated from that State some 40 years ago from Westfield, in Massachusetts, and from whom they sprang. They are now living in Riley town, and in prosperous circumstances, an uncommonly numerous progeny. The family consisted originally of the father, mother and 17 children—12 sons and 5 daughters. Sixteen have lived to be heads of families—one son having died at an early age; and the 11 who grew to manhood all learned trades, viz: 4 carpenters, 5 bricklayers, 1 millwright and 1 stone cutter. Nine of them reside in Cincinnati, all of whom are members of churches, prominent in their several branches of business, and respected in all the relations of life.

From the father and mother, who are now living at the ages of 71 and 72 years, have sprung, besides the 17 children, 108 grand children; and grand children in law number 33. There were present on the occasion referred to, parents 2, children 14, grand children 22, and great-grand children in all 149. They all seated themselves at a collation provided for them, excellent in quality, and appropriately and conveniently arranged in the form of a hollow square with a table in the centre. Around this table were the father and mother, their brothers and sisters, and husbands and wives who were present; while the children, with their families and descendants, were seated around the hollow square. After feasting heartily on the good things provided on the occasion the "Family Cake" was divided among them. It was six feet in circumference, and worked in some beautiful devices on the top—two hands in the grip of friendship, with the word "United" immediately below, being expressive of the occasion. After an hour or two spent together, they separated, perhaps not to meet again on earth.—*Newark Advertiser.*

Horse Shoeing.—The following very exceedingly sensible remarks are from the pen of Mr. Miles, veterinary surgeon to the Queen of England's life-guards, and author of several valuable veterinary works. He commences them thus: "The shoeing of the horse is a most important part of his management, and one which every person who has to do with the horse, and almost indispensable animal, the horse, in his charge. That class of persons very correctly characterized by Surgeon Miles as 'assinine smiths' are invited to give their attention: The shoes of the horse should be of equal thickness throughout, with a flat ground surface, as those with high heels which assinine smiths make in imitation of their own are dangerous to the horse, and which, when the shoe is lowered, and nature's plan reversed, which elevates the point in order to avoid obstructions. The web should be wide and of the same width throughout, instead of being pinched in because the smith likes to see the shoe well set off at the heels. This is both unphilosophical and detrimental: it deprives the eye of the man and injures the foot of the horse. The shoe should be of the same width as the hoof, and the remaining width of the web projects over the hoof; so the master who thinks his horse has a good open foot, only has to be proud of a bad open shoe, which both conceals deformities underneath, and invites with open arms a bad road to come and do its worst."

The heels are made bare just where the navicular joint is most exposed; and that is, in fact, inflamed, what must the agony be when the shoe is lowered, and the hoof is pinched, and the shoe is lowered, and nature's plan reversed, which elevates the point in order to avoid obstructions. The web should be wide and of the same width throughout, instead of being pinched in because the smith likes to see the shoe well set off at the heels. This is both unphilosophical and detrimental: it deprives the eye of the man and injures the foot of the horse. The shoe should be of the same width as the hoof, and the remaining width of the web projects over the hoof; so the master who thinks his horse has a good open foot, only has to be proud of a bad open shoe, which both conceals deformities underneath, and invites with open arms a bad road to come and do its worst."

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